

Scoring and Rating Process- posted 6/29/10

Many court interpreter candidates want to know more about the rating of the written and oral exams. In the following segments, we will focus on the standardized methods used in scoring both exams.

Interpreter Candidate *“Hi, I’m getting ready to take the court interpreter written exam and I have a few questions. What’s on the test?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“The current written exam is an English-only test of 135 multiple-choice questions. The Candidate Information Bulletin for the written exam has all the details about the test.”*

“The exam assesses knowledge of general English grammar, court-related terminology, and ethics and professional conduct.”

Interpreter Candidate *“How is the written exam scored?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“All candidates will take the written exam on the computer. When the exam is completed, your scores will be automatically generated.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“So, I’ll be able to see my scores immediately?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“That’s right. You’ll receive a printed score report immediately following the written exam.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“That’s great. What score do I need to pass?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“To pass, you will need to answer at least 80 percent of the questions correctly.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“What if I don’t pass?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“We suggest that everyone prepare before they take the exam, but if you don’t pass the written exam with 80 percent or higher, you can take it again. You can take the written exam twice in 12 months, and you must wait a minimum of 90 days between attempts.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“And if I pass?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Once you pass, you are eligible to take the oral exam.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“I’m preparing for the Spanish court interpreter oral exam and I would like to know what I will be tested on?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Okay, so you will be taking the bilingual interpreting exam for certified languages. Content is based on actual courtroom transcripts, and the exam tests your ability to interpret in sight translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation. To find out more about the exam content, you can review the Test Construction Manual and the Oral Exam Overview posted on our web site.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“Can you tell me how the oral exams are scored?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“When you take the exam, a recording is made of your performance on the different components: sight translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation [show text of these words: sight translation, consecutive interpretation, simultaneous interpretation]. Then your recording is sent to a minimum of two qualified raters.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“So, my exam will be sent to at least two raters?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Yes, that’s right.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“Is my identity protected on the exam?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Yes, exams are assigned to raters throughout the country. No names, regional locations, or other identifying information are on the exam recordings.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“What is the passing score for the bilingual interpreting exam?”*
Ayanna Cage, AOC *To pass the bilingual interpreting exam, you must correctly interpret a minimum of 70 percent of the scoring units on each part of the exam.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“Scoring units? What are those?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Scoring units are pre-selected words and phrases located throughout the exam. They represent language that interpreters encounter on the job, for example legal terminology, grammatical structures, and slang.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“How will I know how I did on the exam?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“A few months after the oral exam, you will receive a Results Report Form. The Results Report Form will give you a breakdown on the scoring units rendered correctly on*

each part of the exam. This report will not provide you with a detailed evaluation of your performance. If your scores are not as high as you expected, you should review the document about performance deficiencies on our website.”

Interpreter Candidate *“How can I learn more about scoring units?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Detailed information can be found in the Test Construction Manual and the Oral Exam Overview located under “Exam Information” on our website.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“I speak Hindi, which is a registered language, right?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“That’s right. We don’t have a bilingual interpreting exam for Hindi right now, so it is a registered language. After passing the written exam, you will take the English oral proficiency exam for registered languages.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“How is it scored?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“For registered languages, the English oral proficiency exam assesses a candidate’s ability to speak and understand English. Scores are based on a 5-point scale. You must receive a 4 or above in all parts of the exam to pass.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“Thanks. Do you have more information I can look at to find out about the test?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Yes, detailed information on the English oral proficiency exam can be found on our website.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“I’d like to ask some specific questions about the raters used for the oral exams. Who are the raters?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Raters are selected by the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts. All raters are certified interpreters or academic experts in their languages. They are located both inside and outside of California, and all have been trained to rate the exams.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“How do I know my exam will be rated fairly?”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“The Consortium and our test administrator make sure that all raters receive extensive training. And they monitor rater reliability and provide the AOC with regular reports on rater performance.”*

Interpreter Candidate *“One more question, if I fail the exam, can I listen to the recording of my exam.”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“No. Test content is confidential. You will not be permitted to listen to your oral exam recording. However, it may be helpful to review the document on performance deficiencies located on our website.”*

Ayanna Cage, AOC *“Remember, for more detailed information on the overall testing process, please look at our entire website.”*

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